

WHAT'S TRENDING AND HOW? PERSPECTIVES ON SOCIAL AND SPIRITUAL IMPLICATIONS OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Dr. D.R. Mane

PUMBA, Savitribai Phule University of Pune, India

Mansi Kapoor

Symbiosis International University, India

ABSTRACT

From ancient cave paintings, Asoka's Pillar Inscriptions to Cicero's web of ancient Rome and now to Mark Zuckerberg's Facebook the basic theme of mass communication has remained pretty much the same, what's changed however is the speed, the way and hence the impact. This brings us to a paradox, its simpler because somewhere it's all complex. So it's increasingly becoming difficult to distinguish between news from propaganda, subtle manipulation from brainwashing, and information from advertising, ideologies from hate crimes.

So, who decides what's trending and how that impacts life and perspectives about human life?

What's real and what's not??

And Why That Matters?!!

Key words: ancient, modern, theme, paradox, trending, perspectives

Cite this Article: Dr. D.R. Mane and Mansi Kapoor, What's Trending and How? Perspectives on Social and Spiritual Implications of Social Media. *International Journal of Management*, 8(1), 2017, pp. 175–179. <http://www.iaeme.com/IJM/issues.asp?JType=IJM&VType=8&IType=1>

1. INTRODUCTION

Interestingly, most who use the media seem skeptical and cynical about its proliferation paradoxically are addicted to it the most.

Social media has provided a space to users to voice concerns, share information, get connected to their friends and families at very little cost, it allows for likeminded people to “connect” etc.

But what might have started as a simple medium to actually connect with each other, to transcend physical and geographical borders has become so big and powerful that people now look to find ways to commercialize on every post, every click, every tweet, every like, every search etc.

To untangle the “web” that we are into it's important to look into what's going on at every level.

When people interact on social media by sharing pictures or posts etc, unwittingly an online identity is created. This identity could be an imagined one or the one we hope to be one day, it is constructed day by

day, tweet by tweet, post by post. And soon enough, this identity becomes our Virtual Self. Its creation is without pain or sorrow, it's without angst. It has seductive appeal. More importantly, it gives the power to create.

Why should people then try and get in touch with the self within when even the body consciousness has little relevance, why should people try to find enduring solutions to life's challenges when the online personality has the power and the capability to distort by constant projection and manipulation.

In the quest for connecting with others, people will forever lose the connection with the real inner self and with it will end the very sanctity of human life, which is to flourish and grow by dealing with the real challenges that come our way.

1.1. It's the Beginning of Dehumanization in its First Phase

Then is the trivialization of the human experience and the speed with which emotions can be felt ranging from deep anguish to elation and joy. To take an example from WhatsApp. It is now common place to be on groups with family members, cousins, school mates, college mates, ex colleagues etc. The posts in half a day usually vary from somebody's death followed by a quick response of condolence messages to a sumptuous Sunday brunch to a joke then on to a game and then on two kids achievement etc. Within the group somebody will also slip in a slimy advertisement for home made sugar less healthy cookies and tangy pickles.

The members of the group will, within a period of a few hours veer from one emotion to the other and what this sudden shifting of gears could do is to stop people from feeling anything at all. Feeling is the language of emotional intelligence. Our emotions send messages in terms of feelings; they are impulses we need to respond to so that our mind and body can work together in harmony.

But with the constant barrage of different triggers, we will put an end to feeling deeply for anything and ultimately will also stop responding to our emotions. A click or an emoticon will do the needful.

Dehumanization in the second phase.

2. THE CREATORS

Since the number of users of social media is increasing by leaps and bounds, so is the power of people who provide these platforms. Big data now is like oil of yester years. In the days when economies were being driven by commodities and manufacturing, people who had access to oil fields ruled. In the knowledge economy, oil and gold have lost their sheen. The powerful are the ones who have access to big data.

Big data mining or simply ways to find out connections into the digital footprints of billions of users be it their messages, mails, search, shopping whatever is being monitored by algorithms to understand patterns and hence project trends. This data is sold to corporate who can then do precision advertising and save millions of dollars.

Secondly and more importantly, not only can people be influenced in changing their toothpaste, they can also be influence in choosing Presidents and Prime Ministers.



So, what if the Alphabet Company which runs Google, the most trusted search engine manipulates the searches by algorithms. We don't know how the search engine works. It is shrouded in mystery or if not shrouded in mystery will remain elusive to the end users because of the mathematical complexity involved.

It is often alleged that search results that we get could be paid for, could be a result of a very subtle manipulation of what Google wants us to see.

In an online article titled "If Google and Facebook can flip elections, does code now rule the real world?" Chris Spannos says:

"As the race for the 2016 US presidential candidacy heats up, research suggests that social media and search engine giants may be able to manipulate voter preferences for candidates. This far-reaching influence may not only affect the US but extend to elections in countries around the world."

A few years ago, when the world was just opening up to social media, it was being considered as a messiah for the powerless and the vulnerable, the media had played a pivotal role in the removal of tyrants and despots and had sparked many a peoples revolutions . But now, there is increasing skepticism and even fear.

3. A PARALLEL WORLD NOW EXISTS

There now exists a parallel world or a parallel universe.

There is one that is tangible, I would not call it real but tangible in as much as the five physical senses can sense. For now there is much which is beyond the range of the five human senses can be dubbed as unreal for us.

This physical world is now slowly losing its meaning. It is dysfunctional at best and then there is this virtual world, a parallel Universe .This is the world that has now gained more power, more influence is now more enigmatic. We the people, the virtual ones are the residents, the rulers are the tech elite and the rules are laid in modern cryptographs or simply algorithms.

But interestingly,

The working of this world too is veiled through illusion or maya.

The sleight too is a sense of freedom, but the chains that bind us are digital, nor seen nor heard.

The process of dehumanization is ongoing, hence it is a victory for this digital universe and its masters.

The masters will rule this world because their codes are known only to them.

So what's real and what's not?

Is there a remote possibility that other worlds exist and we take part in them too?

4. WHAT SCIENCE SAYS

The extent that we even understand string theory, it may imply a massive number of possible different universes with different laws of physics in each universe, and there may be no way of distinguishing between them or saying why the laws of physics are the way they are. And if I can predict anything, then I haven't explained anything." - Lawrence M Krauss

"Sometime in the future, science will be able to create realities that we can't even begin to imagine. As we evolve, we'll be able to construct other information systems that correspond to other realities, universes based on logic completely different from ours and not based on space and time." - Robert Lanza

5. COMING TOGETHER OF THE TWO ENDS OF HUMAN THOUGHT

It's one of those moments in time when science and spirituality, which were the two extreme ends of the continuum of human thought are coming together. This is fascinating because, science was on a pedestal owing to its rational, physical, observable so quantifiable and thus measurable, predictable structure. On the other hand, spirituality was mumbo jumbo, in the realm of the occult, mystic. The subject had no real value because most concepts were beyond observation, and much beyond the purview of rational thought,

there was no scientific validity, no proof, and certainly no prediction. With the world obsessed with material progress, there was no room for the other; there was no room for what was being called “unscientific thought” But now, scientists acknowledge that there are many questions to which answers are still being sought, many questions that have not even been raised because raising them requires greater awareness. The physical laws that we hold so true, apply in a limited context or range or dimension. At the extreme micro and the macro levels, different rules apply or what we know does not apply. For example, according to quantum physics at sub atomic levels a substance can be a wave or a particle. It exists as probability and its ultimate manifestation will depend on the expectation of the observer!!!!

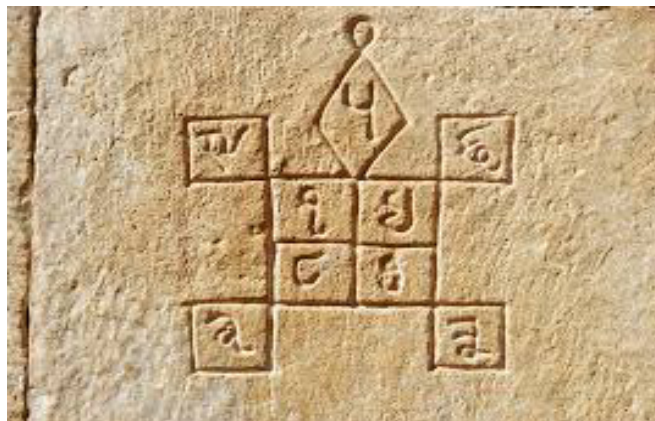
The point to ponder over however is what has caused the shift in attitude towards ancient knowledge. Ironically it is the advances we are making with technology that is also helping us to gain perspectives into the wonders of our ancient civilization.

Technology is helping us gain insights and help us understand what the spiritual masters have been saying all along. Computers generate big data; our entire electronic history is stored somewhere and can be accessed and retrieved if required. The same is said of Akashik Records. . They are energetic records of all souls. This information is stored in what is called the Akashik Field also called Zero point field. Now since we know what big data is, how is it created, where is it stored, how can it be retrieved, we can now also begin to think that the akashik records can also be a possibility.

Similarly, when we view a virtual world and take stock of our virtual identity, we know for sure that this virtual identity has a source. It is a kind of a projection of reality somewhere. Similarly, maybe this body of ours with our ingrained thinking patterns or subconscious is also a projection of another being or thing which could likewise be more substantial, more true, more profound and permanent. Also, human beings in our current mental and physical structures we are actually not capable of creating anything new. We only can harness some resource, or recycle it at best, we can tinker with things or energy. So if today we are talking of big data, somewhere in the universe that technology already exists in a more advanced form.. To appreciate this idea, one needs to look into the source of ideas. Most ideas come through intuition which is nothing else but the cosmic intelligence whispering gently into our ears inspiring us to do something.

6. CONCLUSION – WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

This matters because the planet and most of its inhabitants are suffering from the greed and the hubris of human beings. To think that planet earth was created only for the human race and for its endless consumption is the belief that will ultimately endanger no one else but our own species. It’s also a time to consider that there is a very strong possibility that earlier too, human civilizations were ‘advanced’ beyond the levels we currently are. Their historic records as cryptic or even more than ours. It’s highly possible that the Mayans or the Indians or the Chinese had greater understanding of other worlds or the true nature of our own one .To suppose that the human race is the only “intelligent” race in this entire universe seems to be nothing but magnified vanity bordering on insanity or megalomania on a collective level.



Why acquiring a different perspective matters? It matters most now, not because of “compassionate pleas to save the earth, plants and countless beings that have been driven to extinction but to develop other schools of thought or thinking that can make human life more valuable and purposeful. It's when we humans delve into what could our real purpose could be on planet earth, we will appreciate how connected we are to things and species, beings and people seen or unseen. It's only in this search for deeper meaning that we will be able to grasp what it truly means to be a human living a life on planet earth.

REFERENCES

- [1] Capra Fritjof, The Tao of Physics, Shambhala Publications, Originally published in 1975.
- [2] https://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/1410.Lawrence_M_Krauss
- [3] <https://www.goodreads.com/.../quotes/5796876-biocentrism-how-life-and-consciousn..>
- [4] <https://zcomm.org/author/chrisspannos/>
- [5] Chintan H Rajani and Dr. Ashvin Solanki, Motivations for Using Social Media: An Exploratory Study. *International Journal of Management*, 7 (4), 2016, pp. 123–129.
- [6] Dr. Anbugeetha, D. An Analysis of the Spiritual Intelligence Self Report Inventory (SISRI). *International Journal of Management*, 6 (7), 2015, pp. 24-40.